An essential tool for everyone on the design team.

Dimension 3D printing can help you quickly fine tune designs and cut weeks – even months – from your development schedule. Now you can test form, fit and function and explore as many design iterations as you like – over your network, right from your desktop.

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What is 3D printing?

An ideal complement to CAD, 3D printing offers a fast, low-cost alternative for building concept and working models. Designed for workstation and network access much like a standard laser printer, 3D printing is growing in usage along with the unprecedented growth of CAD solid modeling.

Both rapid prototyping (RP) and 3D printing technologies build models layer by layer from STL data. The cost difference per part between 3D printing and RP systems can be significant. Including material, machine depreciation, system maintenance and labor, a part built using RP technology can cost nearly twice as much compared to 3D printing.

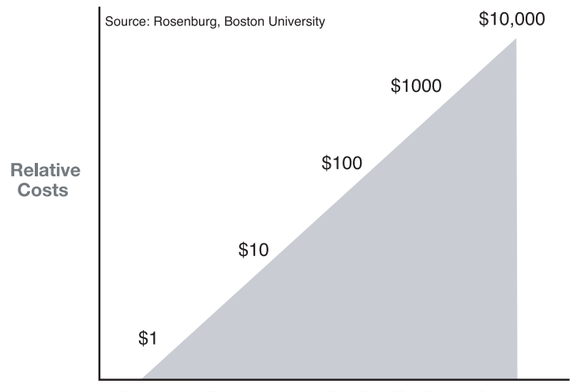
3D printing makes exploring multiple design iterations more efficient and cost-effective.

More expensive RP systems are often centrally located with a dedicated staff functioning much like an in-house service bureau. 3D printers are smaller, more affordable and suitable for installation near an end user providing convenience and ease of use that eliminates "departmental delay."

Outsource vs. Inhouse.

Enlisting a service provider to build prototype parts requires exchanging confidential STL data. Turnaround time depends on the quality and complexity of the STL file and can require additional CAD work.

While there are many variables in comparing service provider costs with internal 3D printing costs, i.e., part complexity, size and tolerances, etc., a company sending one relatively simple part per week to an outside service provider could, by comparison, pay for a 3D printer in a matter of months – and maintain control and confidentiality internally.



Change costs more over time.

Design cycles are fast becoming more compressed and accelerated. Speed to market is a significant competitive advantage. Studies show a product six months late to market will have already lost up to 33% of its gross profit potential.

3D printing quickly enables better communication and collaboration between everyone involved in the process. Poor communication, extensive changes and missed deadlines increase costs exponentially throughout each step of design and development. A Wohlers Industry Report notes that a modest engineering change costing $100 in the Proof of Concept phase could escalate to a staggering $1,000,000 when the product is in the field.